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DISSERTATION

UPON THAT

SPECIES

OF

MISGOVERNMENT,

CALLED AN

OLIGARCHY.

Ἐἰς Κόρανος ἔστω,
Ἐἰς Βασιλευς.

HOMER. B.

LONDON:

Printed for J. FREEMAN, near St. Paul's. 1748.

[Price One Shilling]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Word *Oligarchy* having been frequently us'd in a certain distinguish'd Weekly Paper, as the true Name of a new Disease which had not only infected but threaten'd to destroy the Constitution, the following Treatise was compos'd, at the Instance of a Friend, to explain the Rise, Growth, and Tendency of that Evil, at other Periods of Time, and under different Systems of Government; and having swell'd insensibly from a familiar Letter into a formal Dissertation, at the Instance of the same Friend, is now made public; That all being made sensible of their Danger, all might co-operate for their Preservation.

A SHORT
DISSERTATION

Upon that *Species* of *Mis-government*,

CALLED AN

OLIGARCHY.

HISTORY is of all Studies the most profitable and entertaining : It furnishes us with a large Collection of Maxims for every Circumstance in Life, and confirms them by a Variety of Facts. The Impression of Precept alone un-enforc'd by Example is too slight to influence our Actions : Reason may ascertain the Rectitude of moral or political Measures, but Experience is the best Argument. In History the one is never without the other, for every Action, recorded in Story, is a Lesson informing us, by the Event, how to behave under like Circumstances.

And whilst we instruct ourselves, from the Relations of old Men in old times, we are wonderfully delighted with the different Manners of Men in every Age. We convey ourselves back to ancient
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times, by Force of Fancy, and live with all the Heroes and Sages of Antiquity : We view with Admiration the Wisdom of *Ægypt*, the Refinements of *Greece*, the Majesty and Magnanimity of *Rome*, and lament the destructive Power of Time, to rob the World of so much Liberty and Greatness ! We enter into their Senates, and hear the irresistible Eloquence of *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* ; we visit their Temples and Academies with the Veneration due to them, and take the Field with *Xenophon* and the brave *Leonidas* ; we are present at all the public Games ; we sometimes laugh with *Aristophanes* or *Plautus*, and are always mov'd with the *Grecian* Tragedies. Thus we interest ourselves in every Event, whether real or imaginary, and not only feel our Passions rais'd in Proportion to the Object Imagination paints as present to our View, but our Taste refin'd, our Reason strengthen'd, and our Virtue confirm'd.

We see the Rise and Fall of many States, whence they began, how they were preserv'd, and what were the Causes of their Dissolution. And by attentively considering the different Forms of Government we shall discover the Beauties of some, the Deformities of others, admire the Excellency of a mixt Government, such as is our own, and know how to preserve the several Parts of it in an equal Poize, that one may not rise up and depress the others. That a Ballance should be kept as equal as is possible is acknowledg'd by all ; for if the whole Weight is thrown into one Scale, or any are permitted to get upon the Beam, to manage and direct the Whole as they please, it is no longer a mixt Government, but an *Oligarchy*, or the Tyranny of a Few. And if these Evils are prevented there can be no Danger of a Dissolution, for they seem to be the only possible Means of subverting such a State.

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Some think the Jealousy and Contention of the different Parts a Misfortune, and Men in Power have been flatter'd for their Attempts to silence Opposition, by creating a Majority of Dependents : Whatever Ease and Safety this Coalescence may procure to the Few, it is a sad Omen of the Departure of Liberty from the Land. It is such a Union as prevailed in *Rome* when she had lost her Freedom, and the Court gave Law to the Senate. It is like the Stagnation of Waters, which produces a stinking Calm : The Violence of a Storm may be bad, but a gentle Agitation does good. In a compound Machine the several parts may have different Powers and a different Motion to answer the Designs of an Artist ; there may seem to be Confusion in the working of the Parts, but the Effect is always regular and useful : Take away one of the Powers and the Machine is destroy'd. It is the same in mixt Governments, which are preserv'd by the Moment and Action of its several Orders, and dissolv'd by the Removal of one of them. The *Roman* Greatness was upheld as much by the Power of the People as by the Authority of Patricians ; the Contests between them did rather support than diminish their Virtues, till one was subdued and then the vast political Machine broke to pieces and was no longer seen to produce its glorious Effects.

This pernicious Step is never taken by the Many, but the Leaders of a Party, the most eloquent and powerful, or ambitious and designing Men, having engaged a Multitude of Followers, work upon them as the Instrument of Power to complete their Designs. Some Men have taken the Lead that they might serve their Country, others with a View of serving themselves.

We are to consider * (says the excellent *Paruta*) the End which a Man proposes to himself when he walks in the Road of the Employments and Honours of a Common-wealth. For if his only Aim be the public Service, and the Good of his Country, the most consistent and expedient Method for his Purpose is to lay aside all particular Interest, and to set no Value on private Favour, to attend only to the rigorous Observance of the Laws, and the Depression of such Citizens as, to the Prejudice of public Liberty, would make themselves too powerful, as did *Cato*. But if a Man, carried away by his Ambition, designs at all Events to make himself great and powerful, he without doubt, will soonest gain his End, by Means of those Arts, and those

* Viene appresso in consideratione il fine, che l' huomo si propone di conseguire, caminando per la via de' carichi, e de gli honori della repubblica; però che, quando s' habbi per mira il solo servizio publico, et il commodo della patria, à questo è più conforme, è più conveniente, postposti tutti particolari interessi, e poco stimando la privata gratia, attendere ad una rigorosa osservanza delle leggi, et alla depressione de Cittadini, che voglione con pregiudizio della libertà publica farsi troppo potenti, come fece Catone. Ma se l' huomo dalla propria ambitione portato, si propone di volere in ogni modo riuscir grande, e potente, à questo fine lo condurranno senza dubbio più securamente quelle arti, e quegli studii, che piacciono a' più, e che riescono con applauso, e gratia dell' universale, come n' auenne in *Cesare*, il quale abbassandosi per salire più in alto, donando per acquistare, servendo al bisogno degli altri per poter loro comandare, seppe sotto queste mentite apparenze coprire in medo i suoi più veri affettati, [*affetti*] et ambiziosi pensieri, che finalmente non pur ne ottenne quella maggiore autorità, che in stato di Republica, à Cittadini conceder si soglia, ma tirò in se stesso tutta la dignità, e l'autorità publica.

those Studies which please the many, and are followed with popular Applause and Favour, as happened to *Cæsar*, who humbling himself in order to rise, giving in Order to gain, and serving others, that he might be able to command them, knew so well how to cover, under these false Appearances, his real Affections and ambitious Views, that he not only obtained the highest Authority, which could be given in the State of a Republic, but drew, at length, all Dignity and public Authority to himself.

If there is no such Man as *Cæsar*, if a timid Disposition, and the want of Abilities, deter any one Man from attempting his Scheme, there may nevertheless be Combinations, and a *Few*, by Tricks and Artifice, may undertake what he effected alone, and so form that degenerate Species of Mis-Government, that is the Subject of these Papers: In which the Nature of *Oligarchies*, their Tendency, Dissolution and Origin are explained from the Writings of ancient Philosophers, and confirm'd by ancient Historians; to shew the Excellency of our own Government by comparing it with others, that we may be more sensible of the Happiness resulting from it, and more careful to preserve it, that we may look upon Venality and Vice with as much Horror as Oppression, and that we may exert all the Powers we have in Support of the just Prerogative of our Kings, the Dignity of our Nobles, and the Power and Integrity of those who represent the common People of *England*.

The Intent of this Dissertation is not to abuse the Persons of men, but to expose their Designs; it is not wrote for the Service of any particular Party but (1) in Defence of the real Constitution of this Country

(1) Ταῦτα ὃ δὴ ληθον ἀνοῖν ἔνεκεν πρῶτον μὲν ἑμαυτὸν
 ἐπιδείξαι βελόμην ἐκ Ὀλιγαρχῶν εἰδὲ πλεονεξίων, ἀλλὰ
 δικαίας καὶ κοσμίας ἐπαυμύεντα πολιτείας. Isocrat.

try against any Faction that shall ever attempt to give Law to the whole Community, make every Power in the State subservient to their ambitious Schemes, and pervert the natural Policy of this Kingdom into a wretched *Oligarchy*.

In order to explain this Form of Government, it will be necessary, for a time, to withdraw the Thoughts of an *English* Reader from his own Country, to consider some of the most miserable, dissolute and corrupted Governments in ancient *Greece*; that he may know what they were, and be prepar'd to oppose them. For whatever may happen to us or to Posterity, thro' our Folly and Vices, our Fore-fathers could have no Notion of an *Oligarchy*, or have imagin'd it even possible ever to start up in an Island, where the Weight of the People has ever been superior to the wicked Machinations of tyrannical Governors; where several Revolutions have happen'd in Favour of the People, who having driven away every Species of civil and religious Tyranny will never submit their Necks, if their Eyes are open, to the insupportable Yoke of an infamous *Oligarchy*.

They have now a Race of Princes, who have no Desire to be absolute, or to govern Men in any other way than by Laws of their own making for their own Security and Welfare, and will continue to us the Possession of that inestimable Liberty which enabled us to make choice of their illustrious House for our Guardians and Protectors; and, for their own Sakes, as well as as for the Sake of the People, it is to be hop'd, they will scorn a base Submission to the haughty, insolent and imperious Dictates of their own Servants, will never truckle to an ignorant *Oligarchy*, or tamely suffer the regal Power to be wrested out of their Hands, and to be usurp'd by
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the Few, to oppress their Fellow-Subjects and compell the S——n to accept their Service against his Will and the common Interest of his People, to keep him and his Authority in their own Hands, to suffer none to be employ'd by him without their Leave, and, instead of Servants to become Masters of the State.

Nor is it to be suppos'd that the People, who lately have given such ardent Proofs of Fidelity and Allegiance to their Prince, and of the same generous Spirit, which once actuated their brave Ancestors, should suffer a Wedge of wooden Politicians to be thrust in between the——and his faithful Subjects, to enslave both, and keep them at inaccessible Distance from each other, to overfet the C——— and impudently call themselves the G———to the Exclusion of both —— and People.

If this Calamity has ever taken Place, if free States have ever been perverted into *Oligarchies*, or a few ambitious Men have ever seiz'd upon the Reins of Government to the Destruction of a free People; such as are the Friends of Liberty, and wish well to their Country and their King, will not be offended with this Attempt to guard against their Ruin, by shewing the Nature of an *Oligarchy* from the political Writings of the Antients.

PLATO, in his Republic, says, that an (2) *Oligarchy is big with many constant Evils.*

That there can be no Virtue, no Frugality, no Restraint of Vice, no equal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, the proper Objects of just and reasonable Government, in such a State, was the Opinion of that great Philosopher.

(2) Ὀλιγαρχία συχρᾶν ἡμῶν κακᾶν πολιτεία.

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The (3) *Few* grasp at Rule and Power to enrich themselves : They are unwilling, by a due Exertion of the Laws, to restrain the Dissolute from Extravagance and Perdition, that they may aggrandize themselves by Purchase and Extortion.

Hence it is evident, that, in such a State, Extravagance, Debauchery, Gaming, Venality, Corruption, every Vice of every Kind, will sooner meet with Approbation than Punishment, and appear abroad openly and unmasked without any Regard to Decency, or the very least Affectation of Virtue. And if this should ever, unhappily, be our Case, we may then conclude ourselves to be in Subjection to an *Oligarchy* ; for no other Power would suffer such Enormities to prevail.

Laws are made to restrain Men from the Commission of public Offences, and Magistrates are appointed to enforce a punctual Observance of the Laws, to protect good Men and punish the bad ; It is for this Men part with some natural Privileges, that they may have the Conveniences of social Life, and enjoy the Benefits arising from a well-order'd Government, and answer for their Obedience with the Forfeiture of their Property, their Liberty and Lives. When the Virtuous are protected, and the Licentious kept in Awe, both Magistrates and People do their Duty ; but when the latter are disorderly and dissolute, the former are corrupt or negligent. If an Officer does not observe good Discipline, and keep his

(3) Ἀρχοντες ἐν αὐτῇ οἱ ἄρχοντες διὰ τὸ πολλὰ κακῶς, ἐκ ἐδέλυσαν εἶργεν νόμους τῶν νέων ὅσοι ἂν ἀκόλαστοι γίγνωνται, μὴ ἐξεῖναι αὐτοῖς ἀναλίσκων τε καὶ ἀπολλύων τὰ αὐτῶν ἵνα ὠνέμῃνοι τὰ τῶν τοιούτων, καὶ εἰς δανείζοντες ἔπι πλεσιώτεροι τε καὶ ἐνπιμότεροι γίγνωνται.

his Soldiers in Order, it is his Fault if they misbehave; if he does not see his Orders executed he is unworthy his Commission and unfit to command. Military or civil Officers may lay their Faults upon their Men, and charge that to Depravity in others which was first owing to want of Virtue in themselves. When Magistrates are corrupt they will rather promote than extinguish Corruption; instead of preventing public Vices they will make them subservient to their private Interests. They may ascribe this Impunity of bad Men to Moderation and Mercy, but too much Lenity to Offenders is want of Mercy to a People.

If the Command of a Ship, says *Plato*, should be given to a Man, not on account of his Merit, but his Interest or Wealth, for want of which the more skillful Officer is reduced and contemn'd, what must be the Consequence? (4) *A miserable Cruize.* (5) And is it not as pernicious in the Government of a City? (6) *Much more so, as it is a Charge of the highest and most arduous Nature.*

He compares the Magistrates of this State, an Oligarchy, to *Drones*, and the People to a *Hive of Bees*, with this Difference between the *Politician* and the *Insect*, that God, in his Goodness, made the latter without Stings, but the former has arm'd himself with such as are most sharp and dreadful to be the Plague and Torment of Society.

It is manifest, that under such a Government the People will be reduced to Poverty, and the Rulers turn (7) *Thieves*, (8) *Cut-purses*, (9) *Sacrilegious*, (10) the *Contrivers of all such Mischiefs.*

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(4) Πονηρὴν ναυτίλιαν. (5) Ἡ καὶ πόλεως πειρ.

(6) Μάλιστα, ὅσῳ χλεπωτάτῃ καὶ μεγίστῃ ἡ ἀρχή.

(7) Κλέπτει, (8) Βαλανποτέμιοι, (9) Ἱερεισμοί,

(10) Πάντων τῶν τριῶν κακῶν δημιουργοί.

This is, I confess, a very rude Censure of *Plato*. Such Expressions are too harsh for the Delicacy of modern Ears : It does not become us to use the plain Language of ancient *Greece* or *Rome* ; for Language has undergone an equal Change with the Times and Words, which once convey'd Ideas of Liberty and Virtue, have now scarce any Meaning at all : There may be Good-manners without *Morals*, and Civility or Politeness without any Regard to the Interests of Citizens or Civil Government. Let Truth herself appear *naked*, and our *Modesty* will not suffer us to admit so indecent a Guest. She must assume a Disguise, and borrow Ornaments from Art, or retire from the World and wait the Return of ruder Ages. Should the Philosopher or Satirist now write as did *Juvenal* and *Plato*, he would be treated as a rude unmannerly Fellow, and no *Gentleman*. The Reason is evident ; our Follies and Vices are so great, that plain Truth is a Reproach to our Conduct, and not having any real Virtues, to supply the want of them, we make use of Affectation, Flattery, Address, and all possible Contrivances to be *agreeable*.

But tho' we dread Satire when pointed at ourselves, we are pleas'd with it when levell'd against others ; and are too apt to pervert that into Scandal and Abuse, which was intended only as Caution and Advice.

This Remark will, I hope, prevent the Reader from applying the harsh Censures, cited here from antient Authors, to modern Statesmen. My Design is not to abuse but instruct, to prevent Men from adopting that pernicious Form of Government, an *Oligarchy*, or the being subjugated to it ; and, by shewing the Misery of that State, to make us more fond of our own ; which, of all others, seems to be
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the wisest and best: It is form'd after the Models of ancient *Sparta* and of *Rome*; and if ever it shall appear again in the same Lustre as it did in the Reign of *Elizabeth*, if proper Care is taken that no Encroachment be made upon the just Prerogative of the Crown, the Dignity of the Peers, and the Power and Integrity of the Commons; if no *Wedge* is suffer'd to thrust itself in between these several Parts of the Legislature, disuniting them, and making all Power and the whole Administration center in itself; that is, if no *Oligarchy*, no Tyranny, no essential Change in the Constitution shall be permitted to take Place (which without the Poison of Venality, Corruption, and a slavish Dependency, is impossible) it is in its own Nature fitted, for Greatness, Liberty, Duration. Such a System as this cannot be destroy'd till one of the three Orders, it consists of, is extinguish'd or weaken'd and reduced so as to have lost the Power and the Virtue of serving the People or supporting the Dignity of its own Order, and the due Balance of Power in a mixt Government; which has been the Destruction of *Rome*, of *Sparta*, and of every free State.

Whenever the Attack is made, it will be by slow and almost imperceptible Degrees; for to expunge the Liberties of a People openly and at one Stroke, is so gross an Act of Violence as no Men in their Senses will ever attempt. Where Force of Arms cannot be introduc'd to enslave Men, Stratagems and Artifices must be employ'd; the Nation must be taken asleep, or in Snares craftily laid and be muzzled like a Beast before it can be broke to the Temper and Condition of one. To effect this, the People must be flatter'd and amused, they must be bribed and corrupted, they must have Scope given them, by the Relaxation of Government, to become

dissolute, that they may mistake Licentiousness for Liberty, and lose their Freedom with their Virtue ; for the one is the Support of the other, they are inseparable, they rise and fall together, and no Instance can be produced of a Nation's having preserv'd its Freedom, for any Length of Time, after it had ceas'd to be virtuous. Men, in Support of their Vices, become dependent upon those, whose Interest it is to corrupt them ; and such Dependency as that is the nearest Step to Slavery.

That the People may not make an early Discovery of their approaching Ruin, and be timely enough on their guard to prevent it, the Form of a free Government must subsist, but its Efficacy be withdrawn or converted to the Purposes of them who intend to be absolute. The People may be amused with the Name of Liberty when Liberty, is gone and then the *Few* may establish all Power in themselves without any Awe of a degenerate Populace, whose Vices have render'd them as unfit to be free as unable to resist. Then they may openly avow what they before had secretly contriv'd, and by Tyrannical Oppressions make the Slaves sensible of the inestimable Value of Freedom, when it is not in their Power to regain it.

It will then be too late to use the Language of *Plato*, which will exasperate the *Oligarchy*, and produce Punishment instead of a Redress of Grievances. Whilst Men are free, they may expose the Invaders of their Freedom, they may boast the Excellency of their Government, and they will be confirm'd in their just Opinion of it, by considering the Faults of other Forms, and the Miseries attending every Species of Tyranny. Such Comparison will give them the truest Sense of their civil and religious Liberties, and that Sense will most firmly attach them to the present Family on the Throne, and be our best

best Protection against foreign and domestic Enemies, against *Pretenders* from abroad and ambitious Intruders at home.

But to return to *Plato*. He in another Place observes, that these Men, the *Few*, will be afraid of prosecuting any War, because they dare not encourage a *Militia*; they dare not trust their own People with Arms, fearing no Enemy so much as their own Subjects; and their Avarice and Corruption will not suffer them to lay out upon foreign Mercenaries a sufficient Part of the immense Sums they have drain'd from the People. They will, if it is possible, avoid entering into Wars abroad, but it is not in their Power to prevent frequent Concussions at home. The poor, distress'd People, excluded from any Share in the Government, and loaded with insupportable Oppressions, may at length grow clamorous; and, as they have been flecc'd of their Fortunes, resolve to hazard their Lives for the Recovery of them and of Liberty. Against the enervated, luxurious *Few*, lost to Honour and Virtue, this Attempt must succeed, and then follows the Execution and Banishment of such Tyrants. For (11) the poor People, having subdued their Oppressors, will put some of them to Death and banish the rest. (12) Such and more are the Evils of an *Oligarchical* Tyranny.

But to render this Account of an *Oligarchy* more perfect, and that Species of Government more odious, it will be necessary to shew its Origin, chiefly from *Polybius*, and the Causes of its Dissolution from *Aristotle*. When

(11) Ὅταν οἱ πένητες νικήσαντες, τὰς μὲν σκοπτήνωσι τῶν ἐπείρων, τὰς δὲ ἐκβάλλωσι.

(12) Ἡ ὀλιγαρχία πόλιν ποιεῖται κατὰ ἔχουσαν ἴσως ὃ καὶ πλείω.

When any Number of Animals are got together, one shews himself superior to the rest, and they follow him as their Master; this is seen in every Herd, in every Flock, as if *Monarchy* was the Voice of Nature: The weak and young are under the Protection of their Leader, and if any contend for Sovereignty it is determined by superior Strength. But if we are not allow'd to account for the Origin of Government among Men from what we know to be the Case of other Animals, it is most probable, that, upon Increase of Families and Tribes, Dissensions naturally arose amongst them; War ensued, and a Leader to each Army of these contending Parties became necessary; the Man of greatest Strength, Abilities and Praise, was constituted General, whose Command lasted at first no longer than the War; but afterwards, when War was continued without Cessation of Hostilities or Intervals of Peace, the *Imperator* had so far establish'd his Authority, and gain'd upon the People, as to command over them both at home and abroad, in Peace as well as in War; and thus, obtaining the Sole Dominion to himself, gave rise to *Monarchy*. (13)

When Ambition, Pride, Avarice, and the wanton Abuse of Power, Attendants upon absolute Authority, possess'd him or his Successors, then the *Monarch* became a *Tyrant*.

Unable to bear the Oppression and Cruelties of such a Monster; the Chief of the People, the most opulent

(13) Μεταβάλλεσθαι ἢ ταύτης εἰς τὴν συμφυῆ κακίαν, λέγω
ὅτι εἰς Τυραννίδα· αὐτῆς ἐκ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν, Αἰσχροκρατία
φύσιν. καὶ μὴν ταύτης εἰς Ὀλιγαρχίαν ἐκλειπείσθαι καὶ φύσιν,
τῇ ἢ πλήθους ὀργῇ μετελθόντι τὰς τῶν πρῶτων ἀδικίας,
γινώσκει Δῆμος. ἐκ ἢ τῶν πάλιν ὕβρεως, καὶ παρρησίας
ἀποκληρεῖται σωὶ χρόνοις Ὀχλοκρατία. Polyb.

opulent and powerful depose him: And then setting about to rectify the Disorders a wicked *Tyrant* had produced, take upon themselves the Administration of Affairs, and form that Species of Government, which is call'd an *Aristocracy*.

When the Evils occasion'd by the *Tyrant* are forgot by the People, these Rulers, that sprung up after the Dissolution of *Monarchy*, commence Tyrants themselves, and the Government degenerates into an *Oligarchy*: And thus having cut off the Head of one Tyrannical Serpent, up starts an *Hydra* with fifty Heads. The People are the *Hercules* to destroy this envenomed Beast, an *Oligarchy*, which, like Smoke to the Hive, would suffocate the Inhabitants, that they may be robb'd of their Honey, despoil'd of the Produce of painful Industry and Labour.

When this Beast is subdued, the People establish a *Democracy* or popular Government in themselves, which from Ambition in some and Superiority of Wealth in others, degenerates into an *Ὀχλοκρασία* Anarchy or general Confusion; not into a Mob-government, for that is a Chimera and a Contradiction in Terms. In this Confusion arises one, who assumes a Command over the rest, and *Monarchy* revives again. Thus it ends in what it began, and this is the Revolution of Government according to the Nature of Things and the History of Men.

Hence we see that an *Oligarchy* is the Spawn of a bad Government rais'd up from the Ruins of *Monarchy*. We may observe also the Imperfections of each Form of Policy, and thence collect the Means of establishing a more perfect Scheme of Government, indissolvable, perpetual, glorious and free, by an equal Mixture of the Three several Powers already describ'd, the King, the Nobles, and the People. Let the *One* have as great Prerogative as is consistent

consistent with the Liberties of the Rest ; let the People be fairly and honestly represented in Senate, and the Nobles preserve the Balance between the King and the People, in order to prevent any Encroachments upon the Prerogative of the One, or the Liberties of the Other.

This, not an infamous *Oligarchy*, is our Constitution ; this alone, and not the Tyranny of a *Few*, is our Government ; and this we are bound to preserve, at the Hazard of our Lives, if we have any Reverence or Regard left for the Sacred Name of Liberty, or dread as we ought the perpetual Curse of our Posterity.

If we are to be Slaves let us be the Servants of one Master : A King may become a Tyrant, but an *Oligarchy* is a Group of Tyrants.

Aristotle, in his *Politics*, says, as it is the worst of all Governments it is of shortest Duration : And as it is erected upon the Ruins of the People, it is only to be supported by Tyrannical Oppressions, universal Dissoluteness and Corruption of Manners.

(14) It will admit of no Confidence to be plac'd in the People : they must be disarm'd ; they must be abus'd and ill treated ; they must be excluded the Right of Citizens. The same Evils result from the Government of a *Few* as from absolute Tyranny.

In Peace or War these Tyrants can have no Security for the Continuance of their unjust Authority. They dare not trust Arms in the Hands of their own People, and are afraid of being betray'd
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(14) Τῷ πλείοντι μὴδὲν πιστῶν· διὸ καὶ τὸ παρῆρσιν ποιεῖν τῶν ὅπλων καὶ τὸ κακῶν τὸ ὄχλον, καὶ τὸ ἐν τῇ ἀσπίδι ἀπελευθερῆναι, καὶ ἰκίειν, ἀμφοτέρων κοινόν, καὶ τὸ Ὀλιγαρχίας καὶ τὸ Τυραννίδος.
Aristot.

by Mercenaries. However that be, Discontent must become general, and a Variety of intolerable Oppressions at length will provoke the Multitude to rise up and subdue them.

These are the two principal Causes of the Dissolution of an *Oligarchy* ; (15) The One, when the People are thoroughly provoked by Ill-usage and Oppression ; The Other, (16) when Men of Rank and Fortune are excluded from any Share in the Government, and a very *Few* form the State Junto or Cabal : Then is the Subversion of an *Oligarchy* soon effected as it was in *Messalia*, in *Ister*, in *Heraclea*, and in other Places.

If the frequent Dangers an *Oligarchical* Scheme is exposed to, and the Certainty of its short Duration are not sufficient to deter weak and ambitious Men from attempting it, the following Oath which such Tyrants have formerly taken, and to which all Abettors of that abominable System must conform their Actions, is sufficient to prevent Men, in their Senses, from submitting to such an infamous and destructive Yoke. It is this : (17) *I will be to the People an evil Agent, and consult or advise that Mischief may be done them.*

When seven of the chief of the Nobility in *Persia* had put the *Magi* to Death (two Servants in the Palace, who had usurp'd the Empire before the Death of *Cambyfes*) they consulted under what Form

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of

(15) Ἐνα μὲν καὶ ἀδικῶσιν τὸ πλῆθος. Arist.

(16) Ὅτε μὲν ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν εὐπόρων, ἢ τῶν ὀνείων δι' ἐν ἡγεμονίαις, γίνεσθαι καταλύσεις, ὅταν Ὀλιγοὶ σφόδρα ὦσιν οἱ ἐν ἡγεμονίαις διὸν ἐν Μεσσηνίᾳ, καὶ ἐν Ἰστρίῳ, καὶ ἐν Ἡρακλείᾳ, καὶ ἐν ἄλλαις πόλεσι συμβέβηκεν. ib.

(17) Νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἐν ἐνίαις ἱμνυεσθαι. Καὶ τῷ δήμῳ κακόν οἶσθαι, καὶ βελλίσσῃ ὅτι αὐτῷ κακόν. ib.

of Government to subject the People. *Otanes*, the first who discover'd the false *Smerdis*, sensible of the sad Effects of Tyranny, and more desirous of giving Liberty to all than of becoming a Tyrant himself, declar'd for a Common-wealth ; but *Megabyzus*, unwilling to surrender up the imperial Dignity to one Man or the *Many*, was for keeping the Power in their own Hands and establishing an *Oligarchy*. This *Darius* oppos'd ; because (18) vehement personal Enmities usually start up in such a State ; for every one of the Cabal wishing to be uppermost and to have his Opinions prevail, they fall into great and mutual Animosities : Hence proceed Violence and Slaughter, which naturally terminate in Monarchy as the least Evil ; and therefore, to prevent such a Train of unavoidable and fruitless Calamities, he declar'd for the Continuance of the old Government under Kings. Four of the seven came immediately into his Opinion, to which the rest presently agreed, excepting *Otanes*, who declar'd, that he would not be the Man to govern others, nor submit to the Government of one Man, and that he would give up to them his Pretensions, if they would promise that he and his Posterity should enjoy their Freedom, which they readily granted and he left them.

There were three Attempts made to establish an *Oligarchy* at *Athens*, which, to the Misfortune of that People, unhappily succeeded for a Time ; and, if they had continu'd, must have been the final Destruction of *Athens*. But no *Oligarchy* is ever of long

(18) Ἐν τῇ Ὀλιγαρχίᾳ — ἔχθρα ἰδίᾳ ἰσχυρὰ φιλέει ἐγίνεσθαι· αὐτοὶ δὲ ἕκαστος βελάμενος κορυφαῖον ἔθνος, γνώμησι τε νικᾶν, ἐς ἔχθραν μάλιστα ἀλλήλοισι ἀπικνέοντο· ἐξ ὧν αἰεὶς ἐγίνοντο· ἐν δὲ τῶν σασιων φόνος· ἐν δὲ τῇ φόνῳ, ἀπέβη ἐς μνηστέρην.
Herodot.

long Continuance; for either the People will rise up against such a Tyranny, and extinguish it, that they may recover their Freedom, and revenge their Oppressions, or, if Despair and Timidity have rendered them fit Subjects to a slavish Dominion, the *Few* will, from Ambition and a Desire of supreme Power in each of them, destroy their own Scheme: For (19) they will not long continue an equal Balance of Power amongst themselves, but one strive for Superiority over the rest; which cannot happen in Regal or Popular Governments, for in them no Scheme or Opinion is embrac'd or condemn'd, no Man chose or rejected, by Men of equal Power with himself, but by the Votes of the People or the Will of a King: And if there happens any Dissention among the *Few*, which it is not possible for ever to avoid, if one discontented Member is expell'd or resigns, he will fly to the People, he will incense them against their Oppressors, and provoke and encourage the *Many* to destroy them, which, when they have a sufficient Leader, they never fail to attempt, and seldom to accomplish. This makes it necessary for the *Few* to put to Death, or proscribe every popular Man of Eminence and Abilities among the People, and every great Man in the *Oligarchy*, who shall dissent from them, or shew the least Inclination to favour the People. Thus were *Theramenes*, one of the *Few*, *Niceratus*, *Autolicus*, and every Man of Fortune, Interest or Virtue, who might have it in his Power by his Popularity and good Qualities to subvert or distress them, put to Death by that *Oligarchy*, which *Lysander* set up in *Athens*.

They did not indeed immediately exercise this Cruelty upon the Citizens; they were afraid to shew,

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(19) Diodorus.

at first and at one View, the large Scene of Cruelties they were determin'd to execute ; they did not dare to spread abroad the sanguine Terrors of their Tyranny before they had establish'd a firm Authority , Tho' the People were worn out with a War that had continu'd twenty-seven Years, their Walls and Fences broke down and demolish'd, their Fleet destroy'd, their Forces vanquish'd, themselves subdued, and the *Spartan* Army at hand to enforce and protect the Authority of the *Few*. They were not fond of shewing their Stings till they could exert them with Impunity, secure from Danger and Resistance.

Upon the first Alteration they made in the Government they appear'd rather gentle than violent in their Behaviour to the Citizens ; for no Tyrant or Tyranny, as was hinted before, is at once the devouring Monster it will afterwards prove to be : The People must be laid asleep or be stupify'd, before their will suffer the Shackles of Slavery to be riveted on their Limbs : The *Crocodile* by Tears, and the (20) *Hyæna* by imitating the Voice of Men, are said to deceive first and then to destroy : *Nero* was not cruel in the Begining of his Reign.

Nemo repente turpissimus.

There is more Danger to be apprehended from the Artifices of designing Men than from an open Enemy : Every Man is on his guard against the latter, but the former work in secret, and sap by Degrees the old Foundations of Government, and, under the specious Pretence of doing Good to their Country introduce those Alterations, which, in the
End,

(20) Diodorus.

End, shew that their Design was not to serve the People but themselves.

Men cannot be too jealous of their Liberties: They ought to suspect all Innovations, every Change, and Look to the remotest Consequences of them; for, in the nearest Point of View, the Covering or Disguise may be such as the gross Eye of the Multitude cannot pervade, and under it may lurk the fatal Seeds of Tyranny and Destruction.

Lyfander, who had more of the *Fox* than the *Lion* in his Make, and who (21) acquir'd Fame more by good Fortune than Virtue, was not so solicitous for the Prosperity of *Greece* as for the Success of his own ambitious Schemes. It was not his Intent to restore Peace and to unite the contending States of *Greece*, that they might be for ever free and formidable to their Enemies: No; he aim'd at universal Empire himself, and in order to that establish'd *Oligarchies* wherever he went. (22) He knew that Species of Tyranny to be subversive of the Liberties of a People, but did not know of how short a Duration it is: He took special Care that it should consist of none but his own Creatures; or if others were admitted, it was only for a Time, that they might first lose their Popularity and soon after their Lives, if they would not act in Conformity to his Designs.

There

(21) *Magnam reliquit sui famam magis felicitate quam virtute partam.*

Nepos.

(22) *Nihil aliud molitus est, quam ut omnes civitates in suâ teneret potestate, quum id se Lacedæmoniorum causâ facere simularet: Namque undique, qui Atheniensium rebus studuissent, ejectis, decem delegerat in unaquaque civitate, quibus summum imperium potestatemque omnium rerum committeret. Horum in numerum nemo admittebatur, nisi qui aut ejus hospitio contineretur aut se illius fore proprium fide confirmârat.*

id.

There's this to be said in his Favour, that he did not attempt the Ruin of his own Country before he had subdued all its Enemies but himself. Wicked and designing as he was, he had nevertheless the Glory of the *Lacedæmonian* Arms in his View : He did not suffer them to be perpetually defeated ; he did not weary them out with a Multitude of foolish, unsuccessful Expeditions ; he did not endeavour to break the military Spirit, the native Ardour of his Countrymen ; nor was he for making Peace with an Enemy at *any Rate* and upon *any Terms* : He did not impoverish his Country but enrich'd it ; he sent Money, and the People receiv'd it, tho' expressly forbidden by a Law of *Lycurgus* ; and this Introduction of Riches into that Common-wealth was the Cause of its Dissolution. Thus *Lyfander* subdued *Athens* by Force, and *Sparta* by Corruption.

Of all Poisons Bribery is the most fatal and pernicious : It is easily distributed, and voraciously swallow'd by the People to their Destruction. The baneful Influence of this gilded Venom is not immediately felt by them, and therefore they are less to blame than those who corrupt them.

It is said, I know, if Men will be corrupted it is their own Fault : If they were virtuous they would not receive Bribes. But are People to be govern'd by flattering and feeding their Vices ? Is a Government not to punish and restrain Vice, but to reward and encourage it ? And are public Vices indeed so necessary to a good Government, that they must be bought up at a high Price ? Are Men to make a Sale of their Faith and Consciences, and set them up at Auction to be sold to the highest Bidder among Statesmen ? That Men in general are not virtuous, is true ; for, if they were, there would be no Occasion for Government ; which was introduced for no other Reason than to promote

mote Virtue and prevent Vice, by an equal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments. Laws are not made upon a Supposition of universal Honesty; but, on the contrary, to oblige Men to be honest: And whenever Governors shall please to make it the Interest of Men to be virtuous, they will not find them averse to their Schemes. When Men are sure of being rewarded for their Service and Integrity, and of being punish'd for their Demerits, they will naturally prefer Right to Wrong. Politicians are so sensible of this, that, if they have a bad Cause to support, they never fail to make their own Use of the Depravity of Men by bribing them to be on their side.

This *Lyfander* did; but as the Laws of *Sparta* had the Sanction of an *Oracle*, and the *Greeks* were ever a superstitious People, he was desirous of procuring the divine Voice of a *Pythonefs* in his Favour; but corrupt as *Oracles* were, always subservient to political Purposes, not one in the whole World, for he tried them all, could by Offers of Wealth or by Menaces, be induced to utter one Distich in his Favour. The Priests of *Jupiter Hammon* in *Africa*, and *Pharnabazus*, a Viceroy of the King of *Persia*, divulg'd his Treachery to the *Lacedæmonians*, and this Discovery render'd all his arbitrary Schemes of Empire abortive.

Happy had it been for *Greece*, if his Avarice, his Corruption and his Tyranny had been sooner detected; for *Sparta* never recover'd her antient Virtues, after she had once admitted Bribery and the Means of continuing it into her Dominions, nor the other States of *Greece* their glorious Liberty, with all its Powers, after they had been tormented with *Oligarchies*.

Lyfander

Lyfander was commiffion'd only to curb the Insolence of the *Athenians*, and not to put out one of the *Eyes* of *Greece*, as *Athens* was then call'd: And when he had inform'd the Magiftrates of *Sparta*, that he had taken the City, they fent him word, that to have taken it was fufficient.

The Design of *Sparta* might effectually be answer'd by the Capture of *Athens* and the pulling down its Walls, but not the Views of a (23) factious Commander, who aim'd at nothing lefs than the Reduction of all the Cities, to have them in an entire Subjection to himfelf; which, as he did it under the artful Pretence of ferving his own Country, brought the *Lacedæmonians* under the extreme Hatred of *Greece*.

He excluded all thofe, who feem'd to favour the *Athenian* Intereft, from any Share in the Government of their Cities, which he had put into the Hands of a few bad Men, who had been his Favourites, or were engaged in his Service, and had promis'd to be at his Devotion. In *Samos* and moft other places the Authority was committed to Ten, but in *Athens* there were Thirty Tyrants.

Thefe Men at firft pretended to have the greateft Regard for the Public Good, tho' they intended no Good to any but themfelves: They talk'd of public Meafures, but nothing was done by them for the People. They faid, they would make good Laws, and provide for the future Security of *Athens*, but all the Laws they made were in Favour of themfelves, and no other Security ever thought of than what was neceffary for the Safety of their own Perfons, and the Support of their Tyranny. They kept up the Form of a free Government to amufe

(23) *Lyfander femper factiofus audaxq; fuiſſet. Nepos.*

amuse the People with the Phantoms of a Senate, and of civil Magistracies, whilst their Strength and their Freedom were taking away : They suffer'd no Assembly to meet, unless it were to give Sanction to and confirm their Authority, nor any Office to be held or Magistrate to act, unless it were to see their Commands obey'd and executed. They seem'd to favour a popular Government and to be willing to admit the Majority into some Share of Power with themselves ; but this was more owing to their Fears than to any good Will they had for the People of *Athens* : They receiv'd three Thousand Men into their Service and communicated to them some of their Power, but then this was only to arm one Part of the Citizens against the rest ; it was dividing the People in order to subdue them ; for in Fact they made no other Use of these Men than to keep others in Awe and to fight for the Tyranny ; and least the three Thousand should not be sufficient, for these Purposes, or for fear of a Revolt, they procur'd an additional Guard from *Lacedæmon* : And then, imagining themselves strong enough for the Execution of all manner of Oppression and Cruelty, and in no danger of any Resistance from the Friends to Liberty and *Athens*, they threw aside the Mask they had assum'd, which was colour'd over with Justice, Lenity and a Regard for the public Welfare, and shew'd themselves to be the worst of all Tyrants that had ever been permitted to vex Mankind. They set out indeed with punishing some dissolute and disorderly Citizens, but soon sacrific'd many Thousands of other Men, all the Inhabitants of *Eleusis* to a Man ; Fourteen Hundred Citizens, who, for the most part, were Men of Rank and Fortune ; Five Thousand fled into the *Piræus* ; and more were destroy'd in a few Months

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by these Tyrants than fell in ten Years of the destructive *Peloponnesian* War: To this Number we may add the Three Thousand Captives, taken by *Lysander* when he destroy'd the *Athenian* Fleet, who were all put to Death, except one perfidious Wretch, the Admiral, who is said to have betray'd his Country and the Trust repos'd in him by favouring the Enemy.

Athens immediately became a Scene of Blood; every disaffected Person, that could be found, was put to Death, and his Estate confiscated. Many Citizens fled to the remoter Parts of *Greece*, unable to endure the Severities inflicted on them by the *Oligarchy*; and of those that remained in *Athens*, there were more who chose to talk of Liberty than to fight for it; their Tongues were sharper than their Swords, and even (24) good Men spoke with more Spirit than they fought. Of this *Thrasylbulus* was made extremely sensible, when he determined to rescue his native Country from the Tyrannical Powers that enslaved it. Instead of appearing at the Head of a numerous Band of Citizens, he stood almost alone for a time, and was rather despised than feared by the Tyrants: They thought his Attempt too rash to succeed, and neglected to oppose him till it was too late to secure themselves.

Events of War are so uncertain, that it is inexcusable Rashness and Folly to treat the inferior Forces of an exasperated Enemy with such Contempt as to be negligent Observers of their Motions and Designs, which gives them an Opportunity of encreasing their Strength, of taking Advantages, which may be equal to that of Numbers, of surprising Men not on their Guard, and of routing

(24) Nam jam illis temporibus fortius boni pro libertate loquebantur quam pugnabant. *Nepos.*

routing an Army greatly superior to themselves. There are Instances of this in every Age: It was this enabled *Lyfander* to steal a Victory over the *Athenians*, to take their City, subvert their Government, and establish the Tyranny; and it was this also that gave Success to the Designs of *Thraſybulus* to remove that Tyranny, which was destroyed by the same Means it was raised, namely, the Negligence of Commanders.

So few were the Number of his Followers that, when *Thraſybulus* march'd to *Phyle*, thirteen Miles from *Athens*, and took Possession of that strong Fortrefs; he had not seventy Men under his Command: To so small a Force, as this was in the Beginning of that glorious Struggle, did *Athens* owe the Recovery of its Freedom.

The Tyrants were greatly alarm'd at this unexpected Step, taken by *Thraſybulus* in Favour of the People: They endeavour'd immediately to recover that important Place; but no sooner were they set down before it than there (25) fell a deep Snow, and whilst some were removing their Tents, others imagin'd the Enemy had made a Sally and put their Companions to flight; upon this being seiz'd with a Panick the Army was oblig'd to draw off. This Retreat gave Spirits to the People; it rais'd in them Hopes of Success, and their Number increas'd from Seventy to Seven Hundred Men. The *Oligarchy* now fear'd the Loss of their Power and the Resentment of the People: They had already been disapointed in their Attempt to recover *Phyle*: They saw the little Army of their Enemy daily increasing, which was more formidable to the Tyrants by the General that commanded it than by its Numbers: They were sensible that the Multitude could do nothing of themselves without such a Leader, and therefore deter-

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min'd to gain him over from the popular Party by fair Promises, if it were possible, rather than to hazard a Battle. They offer'd to make him one of the *Oligarchy*, but he disdain'd their Proposal; he knew the Fate of *Theramenes* and others too well to trust them: He had taken up Arms in Defence of the People, and was resolv'd not to lay them down till their Liberties were restor'd to them again.

By this Time he had a thousand Followers, with which Strength he quitted the Garrison of *Phyle*, seized upon the *Pyraeus*, and gave Battle to the Tyrants, in which fell two of the principal Men in the *Oligarchy*, and the rest were defeated.

After this Victory *Thrasybulus* exhorted the three thousand *Athenians*, who had served the Tyrants, no longer to be the Instruments of a Faction that was destructive of the Liberties of their Country. He assured them that his only Aim in these Com-motions was to rescue *Athens* from a State of Slavery: That he would not have appeared in Arms against them, if they had not been the Associates of such as had changed the free Government of *Athens* into the Tyranny of a Few: That it was their Cause he maintained as well as that of his Followers; that they were Fellow-Citizens, and ought not to be armed against one another, but mutually join in the Subversion of that Form of Government, which had been imposed upon them by their Enemies, and had exercised such Cruelties by Slaughter, Banishment, and the Forfeiture of Estates, as *Athens* never had felt before.

By such like popular and well-meaning Declarations he easily prevailed upon the three thousand (many of whom, it is probable, disliked the Proceedings of the *Oligarchy*, and had embarked in their Cause, for the sake of some immediate Interest,

rest, and from the then desperate Situation of Affairs, together with the favourable Promises at first made by the *Few*) to revolt from and abandon the Tyrants; who, forsaken by their *Athenian* Auxiliaries, were not long after divested of their Powers and obliged to quit *Athens*.

Thus ended this Attempt of establishing an *Oligarchy* in that City: But it was immediately succeeded by another, which behaved in the same Manner and soon met with the same Fate.

The Conduct of Men upon Alterations in Government, and when they have resumed all Power into their own Hands, is amazing: They think of nothing more than the Removal of a present Distress, and rarely provide against the quick Return of like Mischiefs again. When the *Athenians* had happily got rid of one Tyranny, they set up another: Though they had severely felt the Effects of an *Oligarchy*, they would yet trust the Administration of their Affairs in the Hands of a *Few*; and, as if their Misfortunes had arisen only from the Men, and not at all from the Form and Manner of their Government, they foolishly expected a Change of Measures by a Change of Persons; they thought to lessen their Evils by lessening the Number of the Tyrants; but the new Governors proved no better than the old ones. When they had it in their Power to put an End to all Tyranny, they should have restored to their Country the Freedom enjoyed by their Ancestors; but this is an Advantage Men seldom take.

Instead of restoring the *Democracy*, they continued the Form of an *Oligarchy*, and, chusing one out of every Tribe, gave that Power to Ten, which they had so lately taken from the Thirty. As these Men committed the same Outrages with
equal

equal Violence and Injustice as their Predecessors had done before them, they were not less afraid of popular Vengeance than the Loss of their Power; but depending more upon the Assistance of their Friend, *Lyfander*, than the Strength of their Party in *Athens*, they sent to him to come and support that Form of Government himself had erected. Having obtained Succours from *Sparta*, he set out for *Athens*, but was followed by *Pausanias*, (26) (a Man of some good Qualities and over-run with many Vices) one of the Kings of *Lacedemon*, with two of the *Ephori*, a kind of Magistrates not unlike the *Tribunes* of the People in *Rome*. They knew the ambitious Views of *Lyfander*, and were resolved to counter-act them: It was evident to them, that he did not conquer *Athens* for his Country, but himself. *Pausanias* therefore, who envied the Greatness of *Lyfander*, secretly carried on a Correspondence with the *Athenians*, and at length concluded a Treaty with them in their Favour, by which the *Democracy* was restored. Thus a King gave back that Liberty to the People which a Minister had taken away.

This, let *Pausanias* have acted from what Motives you will, is an illustrious Instance of regal Virtue, and such as may deserve to be imitated by some future Prince: That, if ever he shall find one Man usurping his Authority, or a *Few*, by the Use of a political Cement to coalesce, that they may not dissolve or be broken, assuming to themselves all the Powers of Government, he may have Mercy upon himself and his People, rescue the Dignity of his Crown, and the Freedom of his Subjects out of their oppressive Hands, dissolve
their

(26) Ut virtutibus eluxit, sic vitiis est obrutus.

their Connections, break their *Phalanx*, and be Himself the Head of his People.

It is remarkable, the popular Party were more moderate and merciful than the opposite Faction: They did not proceed to Extremities with their Enemy; they did not return the Barbarities that had been inflicted on them, but, on the contrary, *Thrasybulus* made a Law, called the *Act of Oblivion*, by which no One was to be accused or punished for past Actions: And when some, who had suffer'd Banishment with him, were for breaking the Law, and putting their Enemies to Death, he prevented it by a public Protestation against it. Thus by his Bravery, *Thrasybulus*, saved his Country, and by his Prudence, softened the Animosities of contending Parties, and obliged them to be Friends.

I cannot relinquish this Period of the *Grecian* Story, without informing my Readers of the Fate of the two great Commanders, whose Names and Actions have so often occurred in this Account of the *Oligarchy*, which was established in *Athens*. *Lysander* bravely fell in a Battle with the *Thebans*; and *Thrasybulus*, (27) the most amiable, tho' not the most splendid of all the *Grecian* Characters, being sent to *Rhodes*, to do for that Place what he had effected for *Athens*, the Subversion of the Tyranny of the *Few*, was, from the Negligence of the Guard, treacherously murdered in his Tent by Barbarians, who in the Night made a Sally from their Town.

I have been more particular in this Narration, than I propose to be in any subsequent Instances of
Oligar-

(27) Illi sine dubio neminem præfero, fide, constantiâ, magnitudine animi, in patriam amore.—Sed, nescio quomodo, quum nemo eum anteiret his virtutibus, multi nobilitate præcurrerunt. Nepos.

Oligarchical Tyranny, because this alone is sufficient to confirm and illustrate the political Maxims of the ancient Philosophers. It justifies the Asperity of their Language, and confirms the Truth of their Observations, and, in particular, that of the short Duration of *Oligarchies*; for these two, under the Thirty and the Ten, taken together, did not continue above three Years. But as Rules in Policy, like the general Laws of Nature, are to be deduced from a Variety of Facts, and not from one single and uncommon Event, I shall produce some other Instances out of History to support the Remarks I have already made.

Three Years before the Conquest of *Athens* and the Loss of its Liberty by *Lysander*, the Democracy (28) had been taken away, the Senate dismiss'd, and an *Oligarchy* of four hundred substituted in the Room of them. The Occasion was this: *Alcibiades* was thought of too much Consequence to be suffer'd to remain in Exile, and they, who before had been the Cause of his Banishment, now wish'd his Return. But he knew the wavering Disposition of the Men and was unwilling to trust them again, unless those in Power were remov'd, and some Curb and Restraint put upon the *Many* who were incens'd against Him, some for his Impiety and extravagant Debaucheries, others from a Jealousy of his superior Greatness. His Terms were accepted, chiefly by the Means of *Antiphor*, and *Pisander*, who had then the Command of the Army at *Samos*; and the most popular Men were put to Death, that the Opposition to a Change of Government, might have less Force; a Guard also was appointed to attend the *Oligarchy* of Four Hundred, and each of them were arm'd

(28) Thucydides, lib. 8.

arm'd with Daggers to intimidate the People and secure themselves.

If Men of great Power, Knowledge and Abilities had not concern'd themselves in this Change, it could never have been brought about; for the People, having continued free for near one Hundred Years, could not bear to see their Freedom taken away, to be subjected to a new Sort of Tyranny so long after the Expulsion of Tyrants, and instead of commanding others, as they had done for the Space of fifty Years, to be themselves under the Command of an *Oligarchy*.

But these Men were no sooner in the Possession of Power than they exerted it in the same Manner as did afterwards the Thirty and the Ten Tyrants. They would have made Peace with the Enemy abroad, that they might carry on their destructive Measures at home; but the Terms they propos'd were rejected: And at last to save themselves from the Resentment of the *Athenian* Forces, who had severely threaten'd them, they would have betray'd their Country to the *Spartans*, but were fortunately prevented, by having the Power wrested out of their Hands, after they had held it for the Space of one Year.

In these civil Contentions, it must be own'd, the People were often to blame. I do not insist upon the Virtues of the *Many* in those Days, nor the Excellence of their Government so long after the Death of *Solon*: I know it was greatly corrupted. The Jealousy and Insolence of the common People, the Fears and Ambition of the Nobility, exceeded all Bounds, and threw the State into frequent Convulsions: They were mutually afraid of each other, and, instead of preserving the Balance of Power equal, were for throwing all the Weight into one

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Scale.

Scale. I would not have the Nobles deprived of their Privileges nor the People robb'd of their Freedom : I plead not against a Superiority of Rank and the Distinction of Orders among Citizens, but against *Oligarchies*; and I prefer a mixt Government, such as that of our own Country, to all others that ever prevail'd in the World. But (29) States die as well as Men, and like them are liable to Disorders and a Dissolution, to prevent which is a Duty incumbent upon every Man that is a Friend to Liberty and who loves his Country. This is not to be done by Tumults, which end as they began in nothing but Confusion, nor by civil Wars and the Subversion of all Government, but by a strict Observance of the Laws, and a punctual Obedience to them, by exerting all the Powers, we are intrusted with for the Security and Incorruption of the several Parts of the Legislature, and by exposing Innovations, and Encroachments, and every forward Step taken by ambitious Men that they may be uppermost, rule over all, and be call'd, *The Government*. This is not less the Concern of a King than a People, as will appear from what happen'd once in the Kingdom of *Corinth*.

After a long Series of Kings, (30) the Descendants of one of them (call'd the *Bacchidæ* from him whose Name was *Bacchis*) interrupted the regal Succession, by taking the Government upon themselves; and instead of a King, they elected an annual Magistrate from amongst themselves, under the Title of a *Prytanis* or President without Power. To perpetuate their Authority, and exclude all others from
any

(29) Hanno gl'Imperii, come l'altre cose mortali, principio, accrescimento, stato, declinatione, et interito, tutte da certe cause ordinate e disposte. *Paruta.*

(30) Herodotus.

any Chance of sharing it with them, they cemented themselves together in the strongest Manner, by never marrying out of their own Family. By this Means they continu'd in Power for the Space of Ninety Years, when one of the Female *Bacchidæ*, being refus'd by all her Kinsmen, on Account of her Ugliness, married out of the Tribe, and had a Son, who put an End to the *Aristocracy*, and made himself King of *Corinth*. For having tamper'd with the People and gain'd their Affections, to get rid of the *Bacchidæ*, he sent them on a Fool's Errand to consult the *Oracle*, and never suffer'd them to return any more.

This Instance shews how imprudent it is to suffer *one* Family to become more powerful than all others in a Kingdom; for when it takes the Lead, it will soon give the Law, and instead of obeying the Sovereign become Sovereign itself. The *Bacchidæ*, it is true, were not Tyrants in the Beginning of their Administration; the Name of *Corinth* was rais'd to a greater Eminence under them than under Kings; but then their Government was in the Form of an *Aristocracy*, and not of an *Oligarchy*, till enervated by Luxury and Indolence they had neither Virtue to serve others, nor Power to protect themselves.

In a complete History of *Oligarchies* every Instance, of that Species of Tyranny, should be produced, and those already mention'd be spread out on a more enlarg'd Plan: But this View of States, in Wreck and Ruin, that once were glorious and free, would be but a melancholy Prospect, and is beyond my present Design. I have introduced historical Facts as Evidence only in Support of the political Assertions of ancient Philosophers, and intend only to give a short Sketch and not a large Picture

of the Miseries of Mankind under the Tyranny of the *Few*. But as the Government of *Rome* approach'd the nearest of any to the Constitution of *England*, it is Time to convey the Reader from *Greece* to *Italy*, there to take a View of the *Decemvirate* under *Appius*, who, from having been the best of Men, became the worst of Tyrants, after he had been for one Year the leading Man of an *Oligarchy*.

Appius, (31) at the Request of the *Tribunes*, procured from the Senate a Decree, ratified by the People, for the Appointment of Legislators to compose Dissentions, regulate Affairs of State, and make Laws, by chusing ten Senators, entrusted with the Power of Kings for one Year; during which Time all other Magistracies, even the Office of the *Tribunes*, were to cease. As *Appius* was elected the first, so he continued to be the chief Member of the *Decemvirate*.

These Men compiled a System of Laws from the Laws of *Greece*, and the Customs of their own Country. They were so attentive to public Affairs of every Kind, so equal in their Determinations, so courteous to all, that the People pleas'd with their Choice, were induced to believe, that there was no Occasion for any other Magistrates than *Appius* and his Colleagues; and at the Expiration of the Year, instead of resuming the Power, they continued it, that the Laws might be more perfect and more readily put into Execution: This was a Motive to the People, but the Design of the Senators was to abolish the Power of the *Tribunes*.

When *Appius* was elected for the second Time, he artfully contrived to have his Intimates elected
with

(31) Dionysius Halicarnassæus.

with him; and tho' the *Decemvirate* was to have consisted of Senators only, he made Choice of three *Plebeians* to serve with him, under a Pretence of allowing the People some Share in the Administration.

No sooner were these Men in the Possession of Power, than they obliged themselves by Oath, not to oppose one another, nor admit any more into their Councils; to render themselves perpetual Magistrates, and transact every thing by their own Authority, without the Sanction of Senate or Consent of the People.

Now the Ensigns of Power are produced, and the *Fasces*, which in the first Year had been laid aside, are brought forth and carried before each of the Tyrants by ten *Lictors*, with a Guard of the most desperate and abandoned young Men to attend them.

Now the People are no longer to be treated with Affability and Tenderness: They are to be terrified into Submission and to be governed by their Fears. Unhappy Reverse of the foregoing Year! They now were sensible of the Folly of continuing such great Power in the Hands of a *Few*, who are as liable to the Abuse of it as is an absolute Monarch.

There is nothing so dangerous to a mixt Government, and the Liberties of a free People as an undue Extention of delegated Powers. * If a frequent Recourse is had to the People, from whom Power is derived, and for whose Service it is bestowed, if the Servants of the Public are within a short Time to account for the faithful Discharge of their Duties, they will not dare to betray the Confidence reposed in them, they will not

* See an ingenious Letter, lately published, in Favour of Short Parliaments.

not have time to form any pernicious Schemes; improper Men will be removed, bad Men punished, the Virtuous rewarded: But if, on the contrary, they are suffered to perpetuate or prolong the Time of their Service, they will grow insolent, they will be under no manner of Restraint or stand in any Awe of the People, Combinations will be formed, and Corruption be their Support. In *Rome* the Magistrates were annual, as of old were the Representatives of the People of *England*; and this short Continuance of Power in the same Hands preserved their Freedom and Integrity.

That the Indigent, and such as are more concerned for their own Interest, than that of the Public, should court and flatter the Tyrannical Greatness of the *Oligarchy*, is not to be wondered at; but who could have believed that a great Part of the Patricians, the most distinguished by their Birth and Fortunes, should join in distressing their Country and become the Servants of the Tyrants, who committed all Manner of Outrages, sparing neither the Lives nor Properties of Men, and who, without any Regard to the Senate, or the People, made themselves sole Judges in every Cause?

This was followed by a general Corruption of Manners in the People; for if the Spring is impure the Stream cannot be clear; and it is ridiculous to imagine, that Men will be virtuous under a corrupt Administration: For they are fond of imitating their Superiors, and will become habitually virtuous, or the contrary, as are their Leaders, and as it is made their Interest to be. Whenever the People are depraved, it is owing either to some Defect in the Laws, or Neglect in the proper Execution of them, and in both Cases,

Cases, as was observed before, the People are less to blame than they who pretend to govern them.

In these Times good Men retired from the City, and waited for the Expiration of the Year, when the *Decemviri* were to lay down their Authority; which they never intended to do. And the *Ten*, to prevent any Alliance of the Nobility with the Commons, make a Law forbidding the one to marry with the other.

The first Step, taken by the *Oligarchy* to incense the People, was the continuing Themselves in Power against the Decree of the Senate and the Consent of the People; the next was putting to Death or banishing the discontented *Patriots*, upon false or frivolous Accusations: But nothing so much provok'd the People as the Licentiousness of those young Men who had attach'd themselves to the *Decemvirate*, and who were as outrageous as if they had taken the City by Storm, and had a Right to plunder, ravish and destroy without any Remorse or Controul. This wanton Abuse of Power oblig'd many Citizens to seek an *Asylum* for themselves and their Children at a Distance from *Rome*. The Senators appointed to assist the *Ten*, could no longer act with them, and together with the *Patricians* who now had not Power to prevent, and would not be Spectators or perhaps the Object of such Cruelties left the City. This Departure was Matter of Joy and Triumph to the Tyrants, till the conquer'd Nations round about, taking Advantage of the Distress of the *Romans* under so bad a Government, appear'd in Arms, to revenge old Injuries and recover what they had lost. This greatly alarm'd the *Ten*, and oblig'd them to assemble the Senators. An Army was immediately to be rais'd, which could not be done without a Decree of the Senate: For
neither

neither Threats nor Intreaties would have prevail'd upon the People to fight for such a Government, under such a Command; and if entrusted with Arms, they might think that of all Enemies none were so bad as *Appius* and his Colleagues. There was no other way to remove these Difficulties than by calling a Senate; but no Senators were to be found till the next Day, and when they were assembled, the Noble *Valerius*, a Man no less distinguish'd by his own Merit than by the untainted Glory of his Ancestors, rose up to speak; but *Appius*, knowing well his Aversion to the *Oligarchy* and that he would certainly exasperate the Senators against it, endeavour'd, tho' in vain, to prevent him from speaking. As *Valerius*, as a Senator, he told the Tyrants, he had a Right to be heard and was determin'd to speak, for the Safety of the Commonwealth, and to expose their Intrigues and their Conspiracy. They commanded him to be silent and threaten'd *Marcus Horatius*, with the *Tarpeian* Rock for taking the Part of *Valerius* and exclaiming against their insidious Conduct. This intolerable Insolence of the *Decemviri* gave such Offence and occasion'd so general an Out-cry in the Senate, as made them repent the rash Step they had taken in forbidding one Senator to speak, and threatening another with Death. To quiet this Disorder *Appius* assur'd them, it was not their Design to impose Silence upon any but only to repress the Forwardness of some turbulent Spirits, who would speak before their Turn; that every one should be heard in his Order, but then they ought to confine themselves to the Business for which they were assembled, not to raise intestine Seditions in *Rome*, but to consult the proper Means of driving away the Enemy that was advancing against them. He then
call'd

call'd upon his Uncle *Caius Claudius* to declare his Opinion first, who less concern'd for his Nephew than his Country, yet willing to save both, reprov'd *Appius* and advis'd him to dissolve the *Decemvirate* as well for the Safety of himself as of *Rome*. He observ'd that the *Sabins* and the *Æqui* were encourag'd by the Disorders prevailing in *Rome*, to revolt and appear in Arms, but if good Order or Agreement were preserv'd amongst the Citizens and the former Government restor'd, the Enemy would soon repent the Folly and Rashness of engaging War with the *Romans*. And since the Senate was now unexpectedly call'd by the *Decemviri*, he entreated the Senators not to lose the present, for they had no Reason to expect a more favourable Opportunity of reforming Abuses or restoring the Government. He assur'd them no personal Security or Emolument could influence him against the common Good of his Country, for he despis'd such Dangers as threaten'd himself only, and deriv'd from his Ancestors the Virtue of preferring the public Service to any private Advantage. (Happy the times in which we may boast of having such Senators as *Valerius*!) He then recounts the Calamities of *Rome*, forsaken by the best good Men of every Rank, dissatisfied with the Proceedings of the *Oligarchy*. The only Way left for the *Ten*, he said, to serve their Country or to save themselves, was to resign and restore to the Senate, the Magistrates, and the People, the full Exercise of their several Powers. He endeavour'd to persuade *Appius*, from a Sense of his former Conduct and of the Glory of his Ancestors, to set the Example. Then might the People be induc'd to forgive them the Outrages they had committed: But he apprehended that their Ambition and their Lust of Tyranny prevail'd

over the Dread they ought to have of the just Resentment of an injur'd People.

Appius was silent; but *M. Cornelius* one of the *Decemvirate*, in answer to *Valerius* reply'd, That they knew best what they had to do and did not want his Advice; that he ought to retire from Business on account of his Age, and that the Senate should confine their Debates to the Subject of War.

The good old Man, vex'd at the Insolence of this Senator and the Silence of his Nephew, declar'd, for his own Part, that he would retire with his Family from *Rome* till the Expiration of the *Decemvirate*, for, unless new Magistrates were appointed, he did not expect any Good to the City or Success against the Enemy.

The Majority seem'd to favour *C. Claudius*, till *Lucius*, the Brother of *Marcus Cornelius*, a Statesman and an Orator, urg'd the Necessity of providing for the War as their immediate and only Concern. To re-establish the former State of Policy would require more Time than could be allow'd; before such a Change could effectually take place, the Enemy would be enabled to lay Waste the *Roman Territories*: But after they had defeated the Enemy, they might proceed to other Affairs, the creating new Magistrates or restoring the Government. Then the Majority shifted to him.

Valerius reply'd that they might choose a Dictator now, without any Loss of Time, as they did a few Years before under great distress and against the same Enemy with desir'd Success; for the *Ten* were, by no Means to be trusted with the Command of an Army.

Most of the Senators inclining to this Opinion he desir'd their Suffrages to be taken, but *Cornelius* insisting that they had already declar'd for him, a Decree

etree in Favour of the *Decemviri*, to empower them to raise Forces and to have the Command of them was made and the Assembly dismiss'd.

This is a short View of the *Roman* Senate at that Time, and on that particular Occasion, when the *Oligarchy*, by Artifice and Insolence, by Menaces and pretended Exigences of State, prevailed over the opposite Party and procured the Sanction of Senate, and a military Force as an additional Security to their unjust Detension of the Powers of Government, which they had, in the most licentious Manner, abused. They had now obtained all that they wanted from the Senators, and were no longer afraid of them, who, if it could be prevented, were never more to assemble again. But what the Senate could not do was at length done by the People, and the Army raised by the *Ten* for their Support, proved their Destruction. *Dionysius* has given a very particular Account of this unhappy Period of the *Roman* History in his Eleventh Book, in which, is that incomparable Speech ascribed to *C. Claudius*. Confined to the Limits of a short Dissertation, it is here pretended only to shew in Miniature, that which he has painted at large of the Rise, the Progress, Effects, and Subversion of the *Decemvirate*.

The *Ten* now grew more insolent and tyrannical than ever; for, having the Command of an Army, they thought themselves secure of perpetual Dominion: And whilst some ignominiously submitted to be the Tools of the *Oligarchy* in every Thing, others tamely relinquished all Concern for public Affairs, and thought it Merit enough to be passive and innocent. But the most Resolute and Brave not despairing of, but expecting, some favour-

rable Turn of Affairs, when they might assist in the Recovery of their Freedom; formed themselves into a Party under the Direction of *Valerius* and *Horatius*, who, with a Guard of Servants continually arm'd, protected their Persons and their Fortunes; whilst the Estates and Effects of them, who had forsaken the City, were confiscated and disposed of, not in defraying the public Expence, but in Bribes to the *Creatures* of the *Oligarchy*.

If they had promoted the Diffentions of *Patricians* and *Plebeians*, and play'd off the one against the other, by fomenting the Jealousy the People had of the Authority of the Senate, and improving the Aversion of Senators to the *Tribunitian* Order, these would not have been displeased that the Nobles were divested of their Sway, nor they that the Power of the Tribunes was taken away. This mutual Jealousy of contending Parties had been artfully kept up for a Time, but now all Pretence of serving the People or respecting the Senate being laid aside, open Force took place of secret Fraud; and the same Severities being alike inflicted on the Nobles and the People, both insensibly forgot their former Animosities, and would hear of no other Difference and Distinction than that of *Friends or Foes to the Oligarchy*.

The *Roman* Army, which under the Command of Consuls, would have despised a more powerful Enemy, was now beaten and insulted. One part of it withdrew to be nearer to *Rome*, and the Camp of the other part was pillag'd by the *Æqui*. This Defeat gave more Pain to the *Decemvirate* than the Citizens, and as it lessen'd the Credit of *Appius* it increased the Party of *Valerius*.

Nor was the City less exasperated by the many Instances of Cruelty committed there than was the
Army

Army by the Murder of *Siccius*, a Man of the greatest Valour and Experience in military Exploits, who having openly exclaimed against the Ignorance of those Men, who had the Command of the Army, was sent by *Appius* as a Legate to the Camp, that he might be at the Mercy of his Enemies, and at a Distance from *Rome*. He was received with seeming Friendship and Respect by the Commanders, who at the same Time had a Design upon his Life; but this he did not suspect, being a plain, honest Man, better skill'd in Stratagems of War than the Intrigues of Faction. He was admitted to their Councils, and advised them to decamp and march into the Enemies Country; which they pretending to approve of, offer'd him the Command of a Party of young Men, well-arm'd, for Observation, and the Choice of Ground. He accepted of the Service and was dismissed, under Cover of Night, with his Guards, who had private Orders accompany'd with Promises of great Reward for putting him to Death. Entering a narrow Pass by the Side of a Hill, they closed their Ranks, and gave the Signal for accomplishing their Villany, when a faithful Attendant upon him, suspecting their Design, acquainted him with it: He immediately dismounted, and took Advantage of the rising Ground, to prevent them from surrounding him. They all assaulted him, some in the Front; some from the Hill rolled down Stones, others flung Darts and Stones at him from a Distance, till at last, after having killed fifteen and wounded about thirty of them, he was slain, and his dead Body left on the Field by this Band of Assassins, who upon their Return gave out, that they were attacked by a Party of the Enemy, who had killed *Siccius*, and others of their Company, and that they, after receiving

ceiving several Wounds, had with Difficulty made their Escape. Such was the last Reward of the brave old *Siccus*, almost worn out with the Fatigues of War, for a long Life spent in the Service of his Country! The Army, griev'd at his Death and willing to recover his Remains, desir'd a Detachment to be sent to fetch away his Body, which the Generals did not dare to refuse for Fear of promoting a Suspicion of his having been murder'd. When these Men found him in a narrow Pass, no Enemy slain, no Traces of an Enemies having been there, no Body stripped, nor any thing carried away, the Cause and Manner of his Death was evident, and that Evidence occasioned a general Murmur in the Camp, not only against the Instruments but the Authors of the Murder, and encreased their Complaints against the *Oligarchy*.

But the last and more immediate Cause of the Extinction of the *Oligarchy* was the Lust of *Appius*, and the unhappy Fate of *Virginia*, which was the Consequence of it. She was left to the Care of an Uncle, and promised in Mariage to the young *Icilius*: Her Mother was dead, and her Father gone to the Wars. *Appius* viewing this beautiful Maid, then fifteen Years of Age, as she passed through the public Streets with her Nurse, fell desperately in Love with her. To marry a *Plebeian* was against a Law made by himself: His own Wife was living and *Virginia* betrothed to another: But all Motives of Innocence and Honour were overcome by the fierce Incitements of a brutal Passion, which, at any rate, he was determined to gratify. For this Purpose, he employs a Bawd to corrupt the Nurse, by Gifts and Promises to seduce and betray her Mistress; and when this Attempt failed, he engaged *M. Claudius*, an infamous Wretch, to demand

mand her as his Property, the Daughter of his Slave, sold to the Wife of *Virginus*, who had no Children of her own. The Claim was to be determined by *Appius*. The Uncle, *Scipio* the Lover, and a Multitude of People, attend the Trial and move for a Respite of the Sentence for one Day, that the Father might have Time to appear, and be heard in Defence of himself and his Daughter. The Cause is put off, and Leave given the Relations to send for *Virginus*, more from the Dread of an Insurrection in *Rome* than from any Regard to Justice; *Appius* thinking, at the same time, to prevent his Appearance by sending Orders to the Camp to forbid his Return. But before his Orders arriv'd *Virginus* had obtain'd Leave, and escaping the Horse sent from the Camp and the City in Pursuit of him, appear'd in Court with all his Friends and Relations about him: And in Answer to the false Plea of *Claudius* reply'd, it was astonishing that a Claim of this Nature should not have been heard of in the Space of fifteen Years; that the Relations were present at the Birth and had taken the Infant in their Arms; that this was not the only Child his Wife had brought forth; and that if she had been barren, she would not have purchas'd a Girl but a Boy. *Appius* then declar'd that he himself knew the Claim of *Claudius* to be just, and accordingly granted a Decree in his Favour: The Execution of which the People would have prevented, if *Appius* had not been attended with a Guard, too powerful for them at that time to oppose. The Father, stung with Indignation at the Violence that was done him under an impudent Pretence of Law and Justice, and pierc'd with Sorrow at the Thought of having his Child prostituted to the Lust of *Appius*, desir'd to take his leave of her, and seiz'd that Opportunity.

portunity to plunge a Knife into her spotless Bosom; as if he had offer'd her up as a Victim worthy of the *Roman* Genius and of Value sufficient to recover the *Roman* Liberty: And the effect was worthy such a Cause. The People, who had slept over the Wrongs of the Republic, took fire at a private Injury: Revenge was now the only Object before them; Danger was forgot: The dead Body of the Virgin out pleaded a thousand Tongues: Whoever had Eyes found he had a Heart: all fly to their Arms: *Valerius* and *Horatius* put themselves at their Head: *Appius* oppos'd them with his Guards, but was soon defeated: And while this pass'd in the City, *Virginus*, stain'd as he was with his Daughters Blood, posted to the Army, and by a mere Recital of the Tragedy, induc'd them to quit their Commanders and repair with him to *Mount-Aventine*. And thus the Army, the Nobles, and the People, being of one Mind, and having nothing in View but restoring the Common-wealth, they found themselves omnipotent: The *Decemvirate* vanish'd before them like Smoke: And what was yet more extraordinary than their Success, they temper'd their Revenge with such Moderation as shew'd that Virtue was indeed a Divinity. They put (33) *Appius* and his Colleague *Sp. Oppius* to Death; they banish'd *Claudius*, and thus restor'd the public Peace, by passing an Act of *Oblivion* which extended to every other Delinquer.

It is (34) very difficult, says *Paruta*, to point out the several Changes in the City of *Rome*, as
its

(33) *Livy* says he kill'd himself.

(34) Questi transiti ancora sono molto difficili da osservare nella Città di Roma, per essere stato sempre il suo governo misto di diverse specie di reggimento: tutta

its Government has always been of a mixt Kind : And yet we perceive how different Parties prevailed at different Times, so as to constitute at last a different Form of Government. At first the most honourable Place was assigned to Virtue, and the highest Honours, and the chief Employments were possessed by some of the most eminent and most virtuous Citizens ; tho' the People still preserved their Part. But afterwards the Nobles growing immoderate in their Ambition, and Avarice, and deceiving the People by various Arts, they drew so much of the public Authority to themselves, in order to support their Personal Greatness, that the Laws losing all their Force, and the Election of Magistrates, as well as the Deliberations on Matters of the greatest Weight and Importance, depending on the Will of the *Few* powerful Citizens, the Common-wealth actually lost the Resemblance it had of an *Aristotratical* Form, and became an *Oligarchy* ; which soon made way for a Tyranny : and under the Weight of that detestable Composition of all the Vices and all the Phrenzies which

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grow

tuttavia si può vedere, come prevaleffero in diversi tempi diverse parti, sì che ne vennero à costituire una forma diversa di governo. Fù da principio honoratissimo luogo alla virtù, e gli honori maggiori, et i carichi principali erano in mano di pochi più chiari, e più virtuosi Cittadini, benché sempre ne haveffe la parte sua il popolo : ma crebbe da poi immoderatamente ne' nobili l'ambitione. l'appetito d'Imperio, e di ricchezze, e con diverse arti ingannando la moltitudine ridussero tanta dell' autorità publica in se stessi per sostentare la privata loro grandezza, che perdendo le leggi ogni forza, e dipendendo l'elettione de' Magistrati, e le deliberationi anco delle cote più gravi, e più importanti, dalla volontà de' pochi potenti Cittadini, la Repubblica perduta à fatto quella sembianza, che reteneva di stato d'Ottimati, prese forma d'una potenza di pochi.

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grow out of the Abuse of human Nature, gradually sunk the noblest Constitution, that ever did Honour to the Annals of Time, and of which, at present, remain no more than the Name and Story.

Having thus endeavour'd to save the Reader from a good deal of Trouble, in wandering thro' such a Maze of Facts, I beg leave to touch on the Use of such a Research: Which is to shew the Folly and Danger of suffering such a mischievous Weed as *Oligarchy*, to infect the Soil of Government: For these Examples demonstrate that it is not less productive in the End of Misfortunes to the inconsiderate and ambitious *Few* than of Misery throughout to the People. The only kind Circumstance belonging to them is, that as they are violent, they are short in their Duration: But then the Seeds they leave in the Ground are of so deadly a Nature, and take such deep Root, that it requires all the Knowledge, all the Virtue, and all the Resolution, ever bestow'd on Men to weed them out.

When the Sluices of Corruption are shut up, and Men depend more upon their Fidelity and Service than the Influence of Bribes; when Merit and Capacity are esteem'd a sufficient Title to Employment, and it is become infamous to make private Interest the only Measure of publick Actions; then, and not till then, will a Nation be Master of its own Powers and in a Condition not only to rectify all its Disorders, but to entail Glory and Happiness on many a successive Age.

It is indeed astonishing that Men, who have *talk'd* themselves into Power upon popular Principles, should not have firmness enough to do any one popular Action! Suppose they were to try for once, whether Integrity be not in its immediate Consequences preferable to Fraud and Corruption, whether

Honesty

Honesty be not in Truth the best Policy. Surely the Result of such a Trial would be as glorious to Statesmen as beneficial to the People: They would be ador'd by their Countrymen to latest Posterity; Calumny could not wound them; Faction would not disturb them; Opposition could not subdue them; Loss of Favour could not disgrace them.

But let us enquire, why do great Men so eagerly covet the Possession of Power? Is it with a diabolical Spirit of being more consummately wicked, more comprehensively mischievous? I hope there is no Man living who ever thinks in the Affirmative. Is it then merely for the Sake of Pre-eminence and Ostentation? If it is, let them reflect that an Emperor may be ridiculous in his Purple Robes and Cockle-shell-Triumph; And that all the Expletives of Titles are deriv'd from the Graces and Virtues. Is it for the Sake of accumulating or wasting Wealth? Wealth may be acquir'd by Merits and Services, as well as by Corruption and Prostitution. Is it for the Sake of a Following? To receive the Homage of Suitors and Dependents? He that is the Friend and Servant of a Nation, will have a Nation in his Train: Whereas he that is only the Jackal of a Faction has no more, than he feeds, for his Worshipers; and when he holds his Hands is sure to be curs'd to his Face. Lastly is it for the Sake of Glory? Glory is only to be acquir'd by Wisdom and Virtue: And no Art can make Praise adhere to a Name that a Series of ill Actions has render'd infamous.

How absurd then does he appear to himself as well as to the World, who, thro' an Impotence of Mind, chuses to be an *Appius* rather than a *Valerius*? Or rather, of how perverse a Texture must that Species of Government be, that will not admit a

Thread of Uprightness or Generosity, Self-denial or public-spirit, to thwart the Uniform of their sordid and oppressive Schemes?

Indeed; an *Oligarchy* is the genuine Spawn of Corruption; it derives its Nourishment from the same Principle from whence it deriv'd its Being: And if we destroy the Nest we infallibly destroy the Brood.

Upon the Whole, was I to be ask'd, if I apprehended that the Canker I have been speaking of could ever make the Constitution of *England* its Prey? I should answer: That if ever it shall be in the Power of any Set of Men to fill the Benches of both H——s and the C——s of our P——s with their Creatures, and to direct in all according to their own good Pleasure, the Constitution of *England* would be superseded: It would from that Moment be under the Dominion of an *Oligarchy*, And nothing could restore its Vigour and Virtue, but the restoring us to our antient Privilege of an annual Choice of annual Representatives.

I would have made Use of the Venerable Name of Senators upon this Occasion, if with any kind of Propriety it could have been apply'd to the *Fribbles* of our Age who consider a Seat in P——t only as a Horse-block to help them into the Saddle of Government.

But not to differ about Names. Should Corruption be suffer'd to bury itself ever so deeply in this Constitution of ours, let but the People be put in Possession once more of the annual Use of their Experience and Judgment, and let their Representatives feel themselves accountable to those by whom they are chose, and the Vermin would soon perish for want of Food. Every man would be on his good Behaviour to his Country: The *Esau* that fold

sold his Birth-right would lose the Blessing that belong'd to it, unless the whole Body of the People could be corrupted at once, which is utterly unimaginable, even if they had forgot what *Specie* was, and the whole Circulation was maintain'd by Paper only.

Under this Regulation also it would be impossible for the *Few* so to connect and cement themselves together as to form an *Oligarchy*. The Session would be over before their Business would be done, and the least Suspicion of such an Intention would be a Disqualification for ever.

Again it would considerably lessen the Expence of Government by lessening the Number of Places and Pensions, which would then be voted, as well as found, useless and burthensome : The immediate Consequence of which would be that the idle and worthless would find themselves oblig'd to become diligent and useful : Private Industry would produce public Wealth : And if together with so desirable a Change, a Change could also be made in our *Military* : If instead of paying a Part to fight for the Whole, all could be train'd to fight for themselves, as was antiently the Case, we should not be more happy at Home than formidable Abroad. We should be able to meet the *French* again with equal Numbers upon their own Ground and drive them, far enough from either *Germany* or *Scotland*. We should then have no Objection to follow our Kings to the War, secure of our Liberty and Property under the twofold Protection of upright Minds and undaunted Hearts. What Power would then dare to invade our Coast or insult our Allies ? Or should we bear to be told that Peace must be made with our worst Enemy at *any Rate*, upon *any Terms* ! But these are flattering Dreams, not to be indulg'd
since

since they never can be realiz'd under *Oligarchies*. And at this time especially whilst we seem to be more extravagantly fond than ever of the most foolish Fashions of a Rival Nation ; not considering that (35) the Corruption of Customs very different from those with which they were first founded and wherein they grew Great, co-operate with the Folly and Wickedness of bad Governors to the Dissolution of Empires.

To hasten to a Conclusion ; nothing is intended by this Dissertation against the high Offices of the Kingdom according to their original Institution, nor against those great Men who are employ'd in them, so long as they shall really discharge their several Trusts for the Honour of the King and Service of the People : It is and ought to be admitted, that they are necessary for the Ease of Government and Dispatch of Business ; but then every one of those Officers should have proper Talents for his Employment, and confine himself to his own proper Province, without encroaching upon that of another. (36) *A. S. S* should not be an *Ad.* nor an *Ad.* a *S. S.* and Every one should give his Opinion freely, of Affairs committed to his Care and Inspection, to his Master, and receive Orders from him or the People and not from a Fellow-Servant. This is no *Oligarchy*. But if a *Few* combine together and take upon them to give the Law, no matter by what Method, to all the several Branches of the Legislative Power as did *Appius* and his Colleagues, by what ever *French* Name the Faction may be call'd it is no better and no other than an *Oligarchy*.

If

(35) La smisurata grandezza di quell' Imperio (Romano) la dapocagine e malvagità di molti di quelli, che lo amministrarono, e la corruttione de' costumi fatti multo da quelli diversi con liquali era stato fondato et accresciuto.

Paruta.

(36) E quovis ligno non fit *Mercurius*.

If therefore this Nation from a quicker Growth of Corruption than was ever known before is in danger of Ruin, if the Supremacy of our P—s is merely nominal, and the Power or Virtue of the People little better than the Ghost of what it was, it is time for Men of all Ranks and all Parties, who have any Love for their Country or the Protestant Succession, who have any Concern for the numerous and beautiful Progeny of our Sovereign, or for the Fate of their own Families, and who mean not the Plunder but the Service of the State by assuming a public Character, to join in its Support, and neither for Profit to betray nor from having been neglected to despair of their Country.

When any (37) Empire is destin'd to be undone, or to lose its Freedom, the Seeds of this Ruin are to be first seen in the Corruption of its Manners. In vitious Governments all Care of the Public is laid aside, and every one is plundering for himself, as if the Common-wealth were adrift or had suffer'd Ship-wreck : And where a People is thus deprav'd, their national Assemblies have the first open Marks of the Infection upon them, from whence spring all Disorders in the State whatsoever. For then such as have most Eloquence, Valour, Skill in Business, and most Interest in their Country, throw off the Mask of Popularity, which they had put on for a Time, and in the Face of the World, desire Wealth, Honours and Greatness; upon any Terms; and this Ambition leads them to corrupt others, that their own natural Vices may be the less observ'd. This Error, in the first Concoction, does presently deprave the whole Mass; for then the Dignities of the Common-wealth are made the Reward of Fraud and Vice, and not the Recompence of Merit. All is
bought

(37) *Davenant* on the Plantation Trade.

bought and sold, and the worst Men, who can afford to bid the highest, are accepted; and where the Management is once got into such Hands, Factions are suffer'd to grow, rash Councils are embrac'd, and wholesome Advices rejected; every one is busy for himself and careless of the common Interest; Treachery is wink'd at, and private Persons are allow'd to become wealthy by the public Spoils; All which is follow'd by **THE LOSS OF REPUTATION ABROAD AND BY POVERTY AT HOME.**

FINIS.

